

demand for shops induces landlords to build over these foregardens. Quiet, straight streets (e. g. Gower-street) parallel to a great thoroughfare might be here and there planted with trees, to relieve the monotonous view of the houses.

It would be a great improvement if all the streets were numbered as in Paris, or as our Regent-street, viz., the odd numbers on the one side, and the even on the other, which might save many a useless crossing in muddy weather.

Suburban roads, when completed, ought to be numbered consecutively, leaving it to the fancy of the individual house-owner to call his house by any fanciful name.

LONDONERIS.

#### METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

ANOTHER crisis is in course of preparation here, or we shall be surprised: the rate-payers are already beginning to stare, and ask,—What next?

On Friday in last week a general court was held at the office in Greek-street, Lord Ebrington in the chair, when several resolutions were brought forward by the chairman, to the effect that Mr. Frank Foster be appointed as principal engineer to the commission, with entire control over the surveyors and their operations, and at a salary of £5,000 a-year, including £200 for travelling expenses; and that a bye-law to that effect be submitted for confirmation to a special court of sewers, to be held at the expiration of a month at least from the court then present.

Sir J. Burgoyne supported the propositions. Previously, he said, a number of surveyors had been appointed to carry on the engineering duties of the establishment. These surveyors acted independently of each other, reporting and doing all their other duties independently, the Board became the controlling engineer, and it was needless to point out how incompetent a court constituted like theirs was for the discharge of such duties. He did not mean to charge any individual with impropriety of conduct. He referred only to the system. There were some very valuable men among their body of surveyors; and he was not sensible of any particular act which made them liable to reprobation in any direct degree. The commission too had a chief surveyor and a consulting engineer who were only so by name and not in reality. They were called to make separate reports sometimes, and at other times they were associated with the other surveyors, but only to consult with, and not to guide, control, or check them. Thus a spirit of antagonism arose among the officers; and it was a matter of public notoriety that the chief engineer and surveyor were at open warfare, while the commissioners were confounded between the two, and never knew how to act, or what judgment to form, in the matters brought before them. It was quite impossible that things could go on in that way. One of the most energetic governments that had ever existed was that of the Emperor Napoleon; and there was one part of his system from which he thought the court might take a lesson. When Napoleon determined on any measure he did not lay down ten or twelve principles, and direct that the execution of each should be entrusted to separate hands, but he said, "Mr. So-and-so is charged with the execution of this decree." The noble chairman was aware that this matter had been early pressed upon their notice after the reorganization of the commission, and the members came to the understanding that, as they could not decide for themselves, they would place the question in the hands of the two eminent engineers, Messrs. Stephenson and Rendel, requesting them to take the matter in hand. These two gentlemen thought that they would wish to have a third person associated with them, in order that there might not be any appearance of a personal bias in their minds. This was agreed to, and they did him the honour to propose that he should join them, which he did. They had deliberated on the subject, and were perfectly uniform in their opinions, and he thought that they might congratulate themselves that there was every mark of approval from the whole body of commissioners when their decision was intimated to them.

Mr. Stephenson re-echoed Sir J. Burgoyne's remarks on the necessity of a change of system, and the propriety of the choice pointed out in the resolutions. He took upon himself the responsibility of recommending Mr. Foster.

Sir H. De la Beche said it was obvious that while the commission was responsible to the public, they required some one as chief engineer, who should be responsible to them for the works which it was necessary to carry out. A single person only could be so appointed, and therefore the creation of the office had been recommended. At the same time, looking to the structure of the commission, he be-

lieved that the great principles of drainage for the metropolis might fairly be considered by the members of it themselves, and he trusted that the public would have confidence in their deliberations.

Mr. T. Hawes was of opinion that, with very little care in overhauling the accounts, the proposed salary would be much more than saved to the rate-payers.

Mr. Hardwicke complained of the insubordination and want of agreement amongst the officers, arising from the want of one great head.

Lord Ebrington drew attention to the constitution of the former Commission of Sewers, and stated that, in issuing the last commission, the necessity of appointing a responsible officer, such as was now proposed, had been foreseen and approved of by the Legislature, it being considered that the large area of the metropolis, with the exception of the city, should be considered as one district.

The resolutions were then put, and carried unanimously.

#### Miscellaneous.

**GOODRICH COURT.**—Sir:—As architect to Mr. Meyrick, the present owner of Goodrich Court, I will thank you to allow me an opportunity of publicly contradicting, in the most unqualified terms, that part of a paragraph, contained in THE BUILDER of the 3rd inst., as to the removal of the armour, and which was copied from a local paper. There is no truth whatever in the statement. Not only is it Mr. Meyrick's intention to preserve the entire collection "intact," but to make such arrangements as will afford the public increased facilities for viewing it at all times: and I quite agree with you, Mr. Editor, that Goodrich Court may be considered, to some extent, as "national in its character."—HENRY HARRISON. 29, Bedford-square, Nov. 29, 1849.

**SMOKE CHIMNEYS.**—Observing two paragraphs in your paper on smoky chimneys, I would offer a few remarks. As to the first plan (p. 489, ante), I have adopted it for my temporary office (being clerk of works) in some cases by the hedge-side, and in others in some corner crowded by lofty buildings, being of opinion that a space like that mentioned was necessary to retain the compressed smoke, to prevent its blowing out into the room. But I have not found it succeed in all cases, like your correspondent, and if it did so the larger space could not be properly cleansed by the sweep's broom. In the second paragraph the author has stated facts and remedial measures. But I have something further to offer on this subject, and in the spirit of your paper let us all lend a helping hand, and so perhaps arrive at the remedy for so long-felt an evil. First, I have always taken care to avoid any space, but what needs be, from the register stove flap, or other fire grate, to the throat of the flue, and where I have the opportunity, I use 10-inch round pottery ware pipe, say from the throat of the flue to 3 feet above it, taking care to make the joints quite flush, and from thence gradually increasing the flue to 12 inches of the same material, and so continue it to within say 6 feet of the chimney-pot, and diminishing it in the same manner as at the throat. The chimney-pot, too, should be the same size, viz., 10 inches throughout within, whatever its form may be without, for architectural appearance, and should always terminate so as to prevent rain water getting into the flue, and also to assist the up draft by the wind. I have superintended the erection of a great many such chimneys, and never found them to smoke. But to construct flues of this size, it being of less area than that allowed by the Building Act, so much of the Act must be repealed (and why not?), since the original size was to afford room for climbing boys. It may be observed that the smoking of chimneys arises from a variety of circumstances; and, first, too often from irregular or bad construction. I have known the same chimney flue vary from 9 in. by 9 in. to 2 ft. 6 in. by 9 in., more or less (a mere hole); and, secondly, the chimney top so loosely stacked together, as to allow the rain water to saturate it for several feet down, thereby providing a complete condenser to the rarified smoke, and, as a matter of course, producing down-draft. The paragraph 14 by 9, generally used, on account of its being consistent for the bond of the brick work, and also in accordance with the Building Act, is inconsistent with the natural shape assumed by smoke or rarified air.—J. KNIGHT.

**PROJECTED WORKS.**—Advertisements have been issued for tenders by 8th December for the reseating of Bridgewater parish church; by 31st, for the supply of 24-inch Yorkshire stone for paving footways in St. Marylebone; by Thursday next, for the erection of workshops at Bow; by 11th, for the erection of a savings bank at Witham; by 3rd, for the erection of a public house and two sale shops at Sheffield; by a date not specified, for the working of iron-stone quarries at Stanhope-in-Weardale; by 11th, for making new line of road in Worcestershire; by a date not specified, for the purchase of about 70 miles of pipes, with bends, branches, &c.—also, for gasholders, condensers, purifiers, retorts, &c., all for an extensive gas-work for the Great Central Gas Consumers' Company; by 12th December, for locomotive stores, carriages, waggon stores, and general stores, for the Great Western Railway; and by 18th, for miscellaneous stores for the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

**COMPETITION.**—An advertisement has been issued for plan and specification, by 1st Feb., 1850, for a new Wesleyan chapel at York—premium 35l.

**SOCIETY OF ARTS.**—November 21st: Mr. T. Webster in the chair. The Assistant-Secretary read a paper on Flexible Breakwaters and Lighthouses, by Mr. W. H. Smith, C. E. The paper, after alluding to the losses and amount of property annually sacrificed on our coasts, referred to various efforts that have been made by means of floating breakwaters to effect an economical barrier to the sea. The principle of Mr. Smith's proposed breakwater is to give elasticity to the structure. The models exhibited were formed of a long wall of open piles, divided into separate sections, each having an independent motion at the top, but secured, and pivoted at the bottom on the screw pile. The braces (with counterbalance weights at the centre), extending seawards from each side, are also affixed by the screw pile. The sections on being struck by the sea yield to it, thereby eluding violence, and the waves passing through the close grating are disseminated. The structure recoils when it becomes in equilibrium with the waves.

THE NEW COAL EXCHANGE has been opened for business. We mentioned the dissatisfaction of the factors with the way in which they were treated at the State-opening. A limited number of tickets were sent to them, the day preceding that of the ceremony, for the gallery next the roof, which they politely returned. A professional joke is circulating on the subject, to the effect that the corporation tried to put the coal sellers in the attic, but failed.

**EDINBURGH ADORNERS.**—Good Mr. Editor.—It is a curious fact that the architectural interests of "Modern Athens" appear to have been made over by her citizens to the tender mercies of tailors. The dean of guild, whose duty it is, as *redile*, to preside over the buildings of the city, and at whose instance the venerable mansion of the Scottish reformer is at present threatened with destruction, is—not an architect, nor a man skilled in architectural matters, but—a tailor! and the memorial which has just been addressed to the Lords of the Treasury, for effecting the demolition of the Register-house Screen, is signed, in name of the committee, by a tailor as chairman, and another tailor as secretary. Far be it from me to join in the wholesale abuse of a class, which must necessarily be unjust, but it would seem that certain sons of the craft find as little compunction in adapting the works of an old-fashioned architect to the notions of modern "utility," as in turning an old coat, or in reducing the voluminous integuments of the parental nether-man to the schoolboy dimensions of a new generation. "Ne autor ultra crepidam," say I; and it is well that the citizens of the classic metropolis of the north can rely in such matters upon the good taste and proper feeling of their representative in Parliament, who is also a Lord of the Treasury, and who is not likely, upon the representation of a few interested, or unskilful, or indifferent persons, to lend his countenance to such innovations, without being thoroughly persuaded and convinced of their necessity.

NO COBBLER.